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Remarks:

Claim 1 as amended defines an invention that is novel and unobvious in view of Boyce and Hashemi. In addition to the features of Boyce, Claim 1 recites the shape of the ramps and trough and requires at least a portion of the trough to lie at a higher elevation than the top of the vertical leg of the latch.

Boyce relies on a U-shaped projection extending down into the drawer to receive the latch. It mounts the vertical leg of the latch flush with the top of the drawer, so the installer does not have to rely on templates or calculations and measurements to figure out at which height to mount the vertical leg. If the ramp and a portion of the trough of the Boyce latch projected above the vertical leg as recited in the proposed claim 1, then they would project above the top of the drawer, which would create a problem, interfering with the front face of the cabinet when opening and closing the drawer and not being positioned to receive the U-shaped projection, which extends down into the drawer. Hashemi mounts the bottom of the latch flush with the bottom of the track, as opposed to mounting the top of the latch flush with the top of the track. This works fine if the latch is to be mounted in a standard track as in Hashemi, but mounting the Boyce latch flush with the bottom of a drawer would not be practical, because drawers have varying heights, and the latch must receive its projection (40 in Boyce and 48 in Hashemi) in order to latch, regardless of the height of the drawer. Thus, the invention recited in claim 1, in which the latch is configured so that the engaging arm will extend inwardly into the drawer and will project above the top of the drawer when the vertical leg is mounted to the inside of the vertical wall of the drawer flush with the top of the drawer, is a configuration that is not taught or suggested by the combination of Boyce and Hashemi.

Claim 6 was also rejected based on a combination of Boyce and Hashemi. The rejection states that the U-shaped projection 12 of Boyce is the front face of the cabinet as recited in the claim. However, claim 6 recites that the front face defines an opening and that the drawer is "movable in a front-to-back direction through said opening". If the U-shaped projection 12 of Boyce is the front face of the cabinet, then the drawer of Boyce does not move through the opening defined by the U-shaped projection 12 as required in claim 6. The front face of the cabinet of Boyce which does define the opening through which the drawer moves is not numbered, but it lies directly in front of the U-shaped projection. Boyce does not provide a latch that latches against that front face as claimed. Hashemi also does not suggest such an arrangement, since Hashemi latches against a stopping post 48 that lies inside the track. The invention recited in claim 6 is neither taught nor suggested by the Boyce and Hashemi references, neither of which suggests a latch mounted to the inner surface of the drawer which is movable in a front-to-back direction through an opening defined by a front face, wherein the latch receives the front face and stops the movement of the drawer both when the drawer is being opened and when it is being closed.

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The Office Action did not mention claims 8-11 and provided no basis for rejecting them. Claim 10 is an independent claim which recites a one piece latch body including means for mounting to the inside of a drawer and means for stopping the drawer by abutting the front face of the cabinet both when opening and closing the drawer. No reference teaches or suggests what is recited in this claim.

Applicant requests that this conference be with both Examiner Boswell and Examiner Stodola. Examiner Stodola had said he would be available on March 24. Applicant's attorney left a message with Examiner Boswell on March 17 trying to schedule a conference for the 24th but did not receive a reply. In a phone call today to Examiner Boswell, Applicant's attorney was told that a conference would only be scheduled if Applicant filed an interview request form and offered to make an amendment. Applicant trusts that this document meets those requirements and looks forward to a confirmation that there will be an interview at 10:00 a.m. on March 24.

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